Our Youth.

A PAPER FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR TEACHERS. PUBLISHED EVERY WEEK.

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THE POOR MAN'S SHEAF.

BY EBEN E. REXFORD.

He saw the wheat-fields waiting
All golden in the sun,
And strong and stalwart reapers
Went by him one by one.
"O, could I reap in harvest!"
His heart made bitter cry;
"I can do nothing, nothing,
So weak, alas! am I."

At eve a fainting traveler
Sank down beside his door;
A cup of crystal water
To quench his thirst he bore.
And when, refreshed and strengthened,
The traveler went his way,
Upon the poor man's threshold
A golden wheat-sheaf lay.

When came the Lord of harvest,
He cried, "O Master kind,
One sheaf have I to offer,
But that I did not bind.
I gave a cup of water
To one athirst, and he
Left at my door, in going,
The sheaf I offer thee."

Then said the Master softly,
"Well pleased with this am I;
One of my angels left it
With thee, as he passed by.
Thou mayest not join the reapers
Upon the harvest plain,
But he who helps a brother
Binds sheaves of golden grain."

NO.*

A Serial Story.

BY ROSE TERRY COOKE.

CHAPTER XXV.

Of course, after so pleasant an introduction, Jack asked leave to call again, and Mrs. Carter granted it. She had been educated as the only daughter of one rich man, and had married another; but father, husband, money, were all gone before Ruth was six years old. Only a few hundred dollars a year were left for both to live on; but Mrs. Carter was an earnest Christian woman, and began her fight with life strengthened by that steadfast faith which is a woman's sole reliance under like circumstances. She took work from a dress-maker who had once been glad to make her costly dresses, and, renting two rooms, began her life with her child.

Now she could see why only one had been spared her out of the five lovely babies that had been laid in her arms, one after another, only to leave them empty, with this one exception, after a few weeks or months.

And how grateful she was for this consolation in her thwarted existence! She devoted herself to Ruth's training and education, and, while she labored for bread, taught her child all that she knew herself, being unwilling to send her alone to the public schools.

When Ruth was fifteen, she was able to pass the necessary examinations and enter the High School of B——. There she thoroughly learned book-keeping, and had now for three years earned enough salary to support both her mother and herself, and let that dear mother rest.

There were no traces of pretension, no grasping after cheap finery, in the three little rooms Mrs. Carter occupied. The parlor carpet was of a warm, rich color, but it was an ingrain; and the easy sofa was covered with crétonne, matching the curtains—trailing vine-leaves on a pale yellow ground. The paper was plain, a sort of cream-color with borders of dark red, the color of the carpet. Two good engravings, in black frames, adorned the walls, and a few roses in a glass vase stood on the small round table between the windows. Nothing could have been simpler or in better taste.

It seemed to Jack, too, that nothing could be prettier than that parlor; it was so home-like, so cheerful, so exquisitely ordered, without the least primness. As the weeks went on he became a frequent visitor, not always to Ruth, for her hours of work were many more than his; but often in the late afternoon he went up with a few flowers to Mrs. Carter, generally wild flowers, for he had become an expert bicycle rider by this time, and made his excursions into the country an excuse for adorning Ruth's home with the fresh spoils of wood and field. Sometimes he took a new book, for Mrs. Carter read a great deal in her solitude; sometimes he shared with her the basket of fruit sent from his own home. Always and ever he talked to her about his mother; talked with such enthusiasm, such admiration, such affection, that Mrs. Carter could not be impatient of the theme, but loved Jack the better because he so loved Manice.

One day, when he had just read her a passage in one of his mother's letters, an idea seemed to strike him.

"I really believe," he said, "that Miss Ruth is the only person I ever saw who makes me think of my mother."

Then, suddenly, Mimy's words returned to him:

"Set the one you think you've got to have, whether or no, beside your ma!"

The warm color rushed to his face. Mrs. Carter did not notice it; she answered, with a little laugh:

"They can't look much alike, if your description of your mother is a good one."

"I don't think it's looks; it's ways," said honest Jack.

Mrs. Carter smiled. She had begun to be a little apprehensive of Jack. Naturally, she did not enjoy the prospect of a possible robber of her great and sole treasure; but now she was reassured. A young man who thought a young woman's "ways" were like his mother's could not be thinking of love-making. No! he was just a great honest boy.

It was Jack who grew uneasy. He had so far only considered Ruth Carter as a friend; she now belonged to the same reading circle that he did, and he often went home

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with her; he saw her home from prayer-meeting always, unless her mother was with her, and even then he generally escorted them, unless they were accompanied by some neighbor. He enjoyed talking over books with Ruth; her mind was quick and bright, but he had never felt toward her in the least as he did toward Jessie Blythe. He wrote freely about her to his mother, and Manice, if she had any forebodings as to the outcome of such a friendship, never mentioned them to Jack.

In the course of time Jack found out that Mrs. Carter's cousin was the sister of Will Boyd's wife, the very Mrs. Brown who had inherited all that property. She had come back to Danvers to live, as it was Mr. Brown's native place; and, having hunted up Mrs. Carter, made her promise to spend Ruth's vacation with her. Jack inwardly determined that his annual holiday should come at the same time, so that his mother and sisters could see and know his friend.

Still, Mimy's words haunted him—and so did Ruth's face. He pictured to himself the same future he had once adorned with Jessie's image, and was content to his heart with the vision. Like the first drop that pierces an embankment, Mimy's words had pierced his unconsciousness, and now there came rushing over him a whole flood of emotion. He knew that he loved Ruth Carter as he had never expected to love any one again—even more deeply, more intensely, than ever he had cared for Jessie; and in the darkness and silence of his room he fell on his knees and told his Father all his heart, asking for this best blessing at his hands who was also Ruth's Father and God.

But with the humbleness of true affection Jack dreaded and delayed to ask the important question that filled his thoughts.

He even seemed less friendly to Ruth. He was often silent, embarrassed. The frank smile and ready laugh that had been so pleasant and cheery were replaced by a certain gravity and reticence. Mrs. Carter thought he was tired of the heat and dust of the city. Ruth feared he was not well, or was perplexed with business.

At last, however, August came, and the three went down to Danvers together. Manice had already made Mrs. Brown's acquaintance, but she and her daughters called directly on Mrs. Carter and Ruth.

Jack did not go with them. He was not ready to betray himself! But Manice had already discovered his secret; who can hide any thing from that mother-eye that is penetrative with the one love of earth? the eye that sees and feels, but seems to know nothing, because it is guided by a heart that has the tenderness, the delicacy, the selfless affection a mother-heart alone possesses. To tell the truth, Manice fell in love with Ruth herself, at first sight! Nor did further intercourse dim this affection; and Ruth said to herself that next to her mother Mrs. Boyd was the sweetest woman she had ever seen.

Yet when Jack, in an agony of confusion and doubt, at last found time and place to ask Ruth if she would marry him, to his pain and astonishment he received a prompt refusal.

His face grew deadly pale.

"May I ask—O Ruth! what is it? Why not? Can't you learn to love me?"

Ruth blushed hotly; she had honestly been surprised; Jack's proposal had, as when a fire touches a torch, lit some strange and answering emotion within her, but her reason was not yet astray.

"I could not marry any body," she said, in a low voice. "I can never, never leave my mother!"

"Do you think I would ask it?" said indignant Jack. "She would be *my* mother then!"

Ruth gave him a little shy smile. "Perhaps she would not adopt you," she said.

"May I try?"

"O wait, please wait!" was her answer, with a gush of tears; and Jack could press her no further. He soothed her with the promise, and oddly enough Ruth, for the first time, began to think she loved him, he was so gentle and so patient!

"All things arrive to him that waits," says the proverb, and so it was here. After a few weeks of delay Jack asked his question again, and received a very low "Yes" for answer.

Why should I describe the happiness that came to them like a gift of God? And was it not?

Jack took a small house the following autumn, and spent his leisure hours and his treasured dollars in furnishing it, under Ruth's guidance. There was nothing expensive about it. Simple furniture, plenty of sunshine, freshness, and good taste, made of the tiny dwelling a real home. In its sitting-room there was an open fire-place, the one luxury of the house, and on the oak mantel-piece was carved a shield with *NO* on it in elaborate and quaint letters. This was Alice's wedding gift to her brother, and her own work. Jack called it his talisman.

About the first of October Mr. Brown's health seriously failed; his work and exposures and privations in the West had broken down his constitution entirely, and Mrs. Brown begged Mrs. Carter to come and live with them as a sister, to be a help and comfort, and permit her to devote herself to the care of her husband. Ruth and Jack both protested.

"My dear children," said Mrs. Carter, "don't be unreasonable; you know I love you, and I know I should be happy with you, and Jack is not the sort of man to fear or hate his mother-in-law; but I know it is best for young people to begin their married life alone together. A third person, however dear, *is* a third person, and a mistake, always. You need to learn to depend on each other, to forbear with each other, to ignore a great deal and accept a great deal with which a third person would interfere, though she might endeavor not to. I shall not go to Anne Brown till you are married; and meanwhile I commend to you as a motto to hang under Alice's 'No' good Bishop Ken's verse,

> "'O that mine eyes might closèd be
> To what becomes me not to see!
> That deafness might possess mine ear
> To what becomes me not to hear!'"

Jack looked incredulously at Ruth, and Ruth laughed.

"There!" said Mimy, coming in at the door suddenly—for all this passed in Manice's house at Danvers, where the Carters and Jack were spending Sunday—"there! that's my weddin' present to ye, three dozen o' dish towels, and two dozen o' dish cloths 't I've knit with my own crooked fingers, and six dustin' rags, and eighteen holders. They aint things to hang up an' look at; they're some like me, good in the kitchen, and kind of honest stuff. And I must say 't, now or never, I'm awful glad it's Miss Right, for Miss Right 'tis, as sure as the world; and I wish ye no better, Jack, than to be as good as your ma, and I guess you will be!"

Here Mimy extinguished her face in her apron and disappeared, but the tears stood in Jack's eyes.

"Dear old soul!" said Ruth, as the door banged behind her; "she loves you, Jack, and"—in a soft whisper—"so do I."

They had a very quiet wedding, just before Manice's Thanksgiving dinner, with no guests but their own family; and at dusk they drove into B—— to their own house, which a friend had made ready for their coming, there to begin the new life.

As Jack put his arms round his mother, after all the other farewells were over, "Ah, mammy!" he said, "'No' has been my watch-word, my shield, and buckler—the making of me, thanks to you and under God. There has been but one better word in my life, and that was Ruth's '*Yes!*'"

THE END.

HOMES are like harps, of which one is finely carved and bright with gilding, but ill-tuned and jarring the air with its discords; while another is old and plain and worn, but from its chords float strains that are a feast of music.—*Anonymous.*

THANKSGIVING HOUSE.

BY ANNA F. BURNHAM.

"O mother, mother, mother!" cried Polly, merrily, jumping up to open the oven-door as she spoke, and upsetting the mortar of spices she had been pounding. "You make me do all the 'round work' this morning! And there goes Cousin Lucy's letter into that pan of squash pie-juice!"

It was the week before Thanksgiving, and all the Daisies were flying around helping their mother in the great sunny kitchen.

There were four of them, and their name was Day, so, of course, the plural was Daisies. And the name fitted, though it was long before Mr. Ruskin had appeared to tell us what girls "should be like." Surely, they were "nice and white" enough, and the "bit of red" showing in their cheeks and lips was enchanting. Beware how you "looked close" to see it!

Mother Day was general-in-chief, issuing orders behind her ramparts of pie-dough.

"Polly Ann, you try that brick oven again! I want to whip these pies in before the under-crust gets soggy. Susanna said 'twas all ready. They've got to go in now whether or no!"

"Polly isn't here, mother," said Kitty, demurely, fishing out the letter daintily, so as not to waste, she said, too much of the pie-juice. "She's gone visiting with Cousin Lucy, as she always does when she gets a letter—forgot to take her body along, that's all! Mustn't expect her to do much 'round work' till she's read that to rags!"

"O yes, she will," responded her mother, good-naturedly. "I do all the 'square work.' Here, Charlotte, step right up to the shed chamber and fetch me another dish of cranb'ries; and Kitty, I want that little crock o' butter on the floor in the further suller—ready, Polly? That's a good girl! What's a girl's feet made for but to run arrants?"

"As if you thought they wa'n't willing to, mother," returned Polly, affectionately, giving her a little kiss as she ushered the pies into the oven. "But you would feel interested, too, if you'd read what she says. You know how she is always working around among poor people. I declare, I feel so selfish getting up great Thanksgiving dinners here at home and eating it all up ourselves, when there are hundreds, she says, in the city who never saw so much food together at once. It seems to me it would sweeten my Thanksgiving if I could do a little something to help somebody else have one."

"I agree with every word the sister has spoken," said Kitty, promptly, "and I would suggest that she instantly set about chopping this tray of mince-meat instead of leaving me to break my little slender wrists over it!"

"Well, Polly, I'll tell you what you may do," said her mother, kindly. "Run over and comfort poor Mrs. Deacon Pettingill a few minutes. She likes to have you come, and you always seem to like to go there."

"Passes me what she does find to call her there so much," remarked Aunt Sheba, who had just come into the midst of the brightness like a spell of bad weather. "If Tom was home, I could seem to figger out some reason to it," she added, suspiciously.

Long ago, when Tom had been "home," Aunt Sheba's sharp eyes had ferreted out Polly's poor little secret, and let her know it in various unpleasant ways as poor Tom went on from bad to worse, and finally ran away altogether.

Polly colored violently, but went on tying her hood and said nothing. She had a sweet, still tongue—sweet when it spoke at all, very still when it couldn't speak sweetly.

"Don't mind her, Polyanthus," whispered Kitty, indignantly; and Polly tried hard to tone down her complexion and make believe she "didn't mind."

"Here," said mother, heartily, "take her these two pies, Polly. I don't believe she'll bake any, and give her my love and tell her I wish she'd come and eat Thanksgivin' with us—her 'n' the deacon; it's dreadful lonesome for 'em since Reuben died, and Tom's going off so was the cap-sheaf. I declare—these boys, these boys! I'm glad mine are all girls!"

"Mother, I never can carry two big hot pies in my two little hands! Susanna will have to come, too."

"Take her, then! Go along, the whole lot of you—it'll do her good to see you. And mind, you chirk her up, poor thing!" she called after them, as the whole merry bevy trooped out of the porch door and across lots to the big rambling old house where poor Mrs. Deacon Pettingill sat brooding over her no Thanksgiving.

She saw them coming across the snowy fields and hastened to "knit into the middle of her needle" before going to open the door.

"There's the Dayses coming—all four of 'em!" she said, knitting hard and looking over the tops of her spectacles. "They've got something another in their hands, bringin' me! Proper good girls they air—from Polly down. Even that sprite of a Kitty aint half so flighty as she talks. I aint thought any thing about Thanksgiving, father—leastways not to do any thing about it. You want I should put round and bake and so? I s'pose I might, if 'tis only for us two!"

"Father" rose and went out without speaking. There were times when even the wife of his bosom was not near enough to talk to, and then he went out to the barn. That was his place, private and particular. There he fought his battles out and got the victory. The calm-eyed cattle made no difference; or, if he noticed them, he thought they looked on reverently as they must have done long ago when magi knelt before Him who was cradled in a manger.

"Mother" never interfered with his solitude, especially in these latter days when he went out there often with his griefs as a child carries a hurt finger to his mother.

"Mother wanted to let you know she remembered you!" said Polly, taking off her hood to shake the sprinkles of snow out of her fluffy front hair.

The girls had been pelting her with snow-balls, and she had been unable to revenge herself properly. She had it now in looking prettier and rosier than they did as she dangled her blue "pumpkin-hood" by one damp string and dried her wet, tingling cheeks by the fire.

"Tell your ma she needn't ha' troubled to send me any pies, though she's proper good to think about it. I s'pose the' aint nothin' to hender me gettin' up a Thanksgivin', only it don't seem nat'ral somehow. Seems 's if I couldn't stand it havin' nobody to Thanksgivin'," she said, tremulously, holding the blue sock so close to her eyes that one twinkling needle took off a shining tear on the end of it and tried to weave it into the stocking. How many tears she had knit up into stockings that way—darned into coarse, well-mended clothes, dropped into faint-smelling "chests of drawers" where dainty little garments lay yellowing, wiped away and prayed away about her work, as I suppose all mothers do now and then as the children grow up and away, and the house gets lonelier.

Polly looked at her compassionately, but said nothing. The next minute she dropped the dangling hood and came over and went down on her knees on the little wooden cricket and put her coaxing young head into the blue gingham apron that was preparing to be used for a pocket-handkerchief.

"What makes you try to, Aunt Nabby?" she said, softly, stealing two arms around her waist and making more havoc with the knitting than a six-weeks' kitten. "I wouldn't—a minute—with a whole world full of folks needing Thanksgivings. I'd fill my house up so full of hungry folks and homeless folks that there wouldn't be room enough in it to hold all the Thanksgiving. O I do know what I'd do if I had a great big, beautiful old house like this!" she added, clapping her hands with a sudden delighted inspiration.

"Massy on us, child, what would ye do? I'm sure I aint

hearn of any body sufferin'—'less it's them shif'less Peterses, an' I didn't know 's they'd really come to want. If they have, I'll just clap my bunnet on and fix up a basket and go down there."

"The Peterses are all right," said Polly, laughing and throwing back her hair.

Her face was all rosy with excitement, and if her case needed any special pleading the eloquence was not wanting.

"It's the Johns and the Jimmies and the Toms—O, I didn't mean to say that!" she cried, in sudden contrition at the look of pain that darted over the poor mother's face as she touched the name unwittingly. "It's only—I've just had a long letter from Cousin Lucy, and she told me about 'her boys,' as she calls 'em—a lot of poor little ignorant fellows, real bad ones, I guess, that she picked up out of the streets, and talks to and works over trying to make 'em better. She says they're hungry most of the time—don't know what it is to have a good dinner once a year; and she said it made her heart ache to think of the great groaning tables at home here where even the crumbs would be a banquet to her poor little Lazaruses. She said she wished she could transport them all here just once—to see their eyes shine!"

"And seems to you you'd like to be 'Mrs. Deacon Pettingill"—is that it?" said the dear old lady, playfully, running her fingers through the girl's hair.

"Yes, I do!—O not if you wouldn't like it, if 'twould make you feel bad!"

"Father, what say?" asked the good woman, kindly, taking off her spectacles and looking up at "father," who had come in from the barn and stood propping up the door-post like a modern Samson.

"Just what you do, mother!" he cried, heartily. "And I guess that's 'have 'em!' Tell your Cousin Lucy to send on a passel, if she likes. I s'pose you'll want something to pay freight; if that aint enough you can let me know!" he said, handing Polly a bright gold-piece, which she took in both hands as if she had been playing "Button, button."

"Do you really, truly mean it?" cried Polly, breathlessly. "Such a beautiful thing?"

"Go ahead!" laughed the deacon. "I guess we can stand a dozen boys or so for a week. We'll feed 'em up once—there's enough on't, I guess, and if there aint we'll call on the neighbors. The Lord's blessed us over an' above this year; mebbe he had had his eye on things, an' knew what he wanted us to do with it. Like enough mother will find up some comfortabler clothes for 'em before she gets through with it. Expect she'll have to borry you girls, some on ye—how's that?"

"I think you are just as good as you can be!" said Polly, simply. "Course we'll come, wont we, girls? I know mother will lend us. I'll go right home and ask her and send word to Cousin Lucy, and be back here with my sleeves rolled up and Aunt Sheba's biggest apron on!"

"Well, I will say for't!" said Mother Day, holding up both hands admiringly. "If 'taint the cur'usest thing! I was thinking just after you went how we had put things through this week. In all the time I've kept house I never reck'lect bein' so forehanded. Here 'tis only a Thursday, and my pies are done, and my cake—black and frosted—every thing in train, so I can spare ye jest as easy as turning your hand over. You go over and work real good and spry, as many as she wants on ye. Don't let her tire herself all out; if it comes to that I'll lend a hand myself. I'll cook some here to home too, an' every time you go over you can carry a pie or a batch o' doughnuts. We'll call it Thanksgiving House, an' fetch in our tithes all over the neighborhood."

"Thanksgiving House" became instantly the fashion. Every body received the idea with enthusiasm. The beautiful charity of "Children's Week" had not then been thought of, but here was the lovely seed of it, blossoming at another time of the year. Contributions flowed in from all quarters. You would have thought a regiment was to be quartered at Thanksgiving House. Such long golden rows of yellow pies—pumpkin, squash, custard—brown-blistered or freckled with nutmeg; such other fragrant, flaky rows with half-transparent crust through which the spicy, only half-imprisoned contents wafted delicious odors; such stacks of twisted and holey doughnuts; jars of cookies; shelves of preserves; chickens in pies and chickens out; turkeys—but language fails me!

"Not a mouthful too many," said Mother Day, who was over counting the puddings and "calculating" whether she hadn't better go home and get up one or two more, "for fear lest they should come short at the last minute."

"Not a mite! I know about boys if I have n't any. Nature never put no limit to a boy's Christian appetite. Things look good, Nabby, if I do say it, and you're all beautiful and ready, and I'm glad, if not truly thankful, that—"

"Folkses! folkses!" cried Kitty, in a great state of excitement, "the coach has come! They are all getting out!"

I should think they were! And getting *in*, too—they were not a bit bashful. It was still early candle-light, and before father could scramble out a coal from the fireplace and kindle a twisted yellow "lamp-lighter" to get a little light on the subject, they had rushed in, a dozen of them—thirteen, a baker's dozen, at that—and there they were to be welcomed.

That was easily done. Polly was the girl to untie knotted comforters and thaw out frozen ears and show them where to shake the snow out of their boots and sweep them off with a broom and—all the other offices of sisterly kindness. She did it as deftly as if she had always had brothers to "do for," and the boys, who had never had a sister—not such a sister! —to do for them, submitted themselves to her fingers and those of her sisters with an amazement of gratitude that set the girls laughing till Polly remembered what it meant and came very near crying. Then came, in a few minutes, the call to supper—and what a prelude to a Thanksgiving dinner that was! How the deacon helped, and how Aunt Nabby "deared" every one of those little "street Arabs," and "passed" every thing a dozen times over, as if they had been the minister!

All the Daisies were waiters, and they ran to and fro and tumbled against each other and were more important altogether in their unaccustomed office than sixteen solemn hotel waiters nowadays.

All at once Polly gave a little shriek as if somebody had stuck a pin in her, and dropped the glass preserve-dish she was "passing."

"Why, what's the matter, child, you're white as a sheet!" cried Mother Day, while the others looked up quickly at Polly's hysterics.

"I—I've dropped your glass dish!" faltered Polly, hypocritically, making a dash for the door without further explanation.

"I'll gather it up, Polly," said Kitty, hastily. "Where's the dustpan? Don't cry—I'm glad 'twas mother's."

"O no!" said Polly, in a stifled voice in the pantry. "Don't make a fuss, Kitty, I'll come in a minute. Tell 'em I've cut my finger."

"Polly Ann Day!" said Kitty, running back with the dustpan, "you tell me what you saw out that window, 'fore I let you out of this pantry. I saw your eyes, and you screamed before you dropped any thing."

"O I don't know, Kitty," stammered Polly, telling the very dingiest kind of a white lie; for she did know, well enough, and it would have taken Tom's own affidavit to make her believe she hadn't seen him peering in out of the dark like a burglar or beggar instead of a naughty boy coming back to his own father's house.

Kitty shook her, she was so vexed, and then kissed her and ran off hastily, for they were calling, "Kitty! Kitty!"

In a minute or two she came running back with dancing eyes and cheeks a-fire.

"'Twas Tom, you mean thing. And he's in there eating his supper. I've broke another dish. He came walking in as proud as a young prince, and he marched right over to his mother and took her up in his arms and kissed her till her spectacles dropped off. And then the deacon got him, and I guess it's the first time he ever cried before folks. And I

think you, Polyanthus, had better wipe up and come back to the table and help make him welcome."

Tom looked as if he thought that was the best part of the "welcome" when Polly did go in a minute later; and then they all sat down, and father piled Tom's plate so full he hadn't any room to eat on it, and mother left her thirteen staring guests to their own devices while she poured Tom innumerable cups of tea which Polly and Kitty and the other Daisies captured for those who did need them. Every body was full of suppressed joy that burst out in little giggles all around the table, and kept Mother Day making merry chatter with the boys, "to keep from having a reg'lar set-to," she said, and finally dimmed father's and mother's spectacles so much that they had to take them off and make a business of wiping them.

"You see we wa'n't expecting of you, Tom," said mother, apologetically, "and it kind of took us by surprise.

Mother had a nice little pride about seeming to have any "prodigal" home-coming. She would have had the boys take it all as a matter of course, and let Tom make his confessions in private.

But it was Tom himself who thwarted her.

"I can't stand it, mother," he exclaimed, jumping to his feet, "and I'd just as lief tell it all right out before these boys —may be it'll help them some day to remember it, and, any way, I aint coming home on false pretenses.

"You see, I was a bad, naughty boy, and I thought father was hard on me, and off I went. But you get to thinking things over when you are off alone, and one day I turned a square corner, only I was too proud to come home and say so."

"O Tom!" said his mother, reproachfully.

"Yes, I know it," said Tom. "But I thought I'd work and earn money and be somebody 'fore I showed myself round here again, and if it hadn't been for Polly, I should."

"Why, Tom," protested Polly, rosily.

"Polly and her Thanksgiving," said Tom. "That Cousin Lucy of hers came into the shop where I was working the other day, and wanted the office-boy let off for a week—'to Thanksgiving,' she said. And then it all came out about 'Thanksgiving House' and the rest of the boys, and I tell you, fellows, I couldn't stand that, would you? To have somebody else—thirteen of 'em—taking my place, and me left out in the cold. No, sir; I packed my box in about two-forty, and now I've made a clean breast of it, I guess we can start fair and have a Thanksgiving—the more the merrier!"

And merry enough they were. It began with three cheers for Tom when he sat down, and it ended—O! I don't know when—who ever knows? I can only hint to you how they went home, well-fed and well-clothed, to their cramped city quarters, with a feeling that for once God had set their feet in a large place and given them a week of his royal bounty; how it "stood by" them all through the year, as all wholesome, happy memories do, and kept them many a time from sin and discouragement and crime even; how, lest it should seem like a too lovely dream, it came again, as all lovely dreams ought to, and they were summoned back next year—the identical thirteen—while Tom did the honors of Thanksgiving House.

EVERY PURCHASER HIS OWN CLERK.

BY GEORGE E. VINCENT.

A GREAT many small business ventures have been abandoned because the clerk hire equaled, or perhaps exceeded, the profits. If only some plan could be hit upon by which a store would run itself without an attendant, great economy might be secured. A short step in this direction is made in hotel lobbies, where now and then one finds a table with the morning papers laid out in orderly array. The purchaser steps up, selects his favorite journal, and deposits the price of it in a cup provided for the purpose. If he lacks the exact amount he puts in a larger piece and helps himself to the right change.

The place, the probable character of the guests, and the very helplessness of the system make it comparatively safe. However, while men continue in the state to which Father Adam introduced them, a business conducted on this free and easy principle is not likely to prove enormously profitable; it is evident that some other plan must be invented which shall secure the desired results, and still emphatically recognize the doctrine of human depravity.

Some progress has been made already, and the object of this article is to describe the machines by which every purchaser becomes his own clerk.

If any of my readers have been in the Providence Station in Boston, or the Pennsylvania Station in Philadelphia, they have no doubt noticed a handsome miniature locomotive placed in a prominent position, and protected by a glass case. At one end is a notice informing the public that if a five-cent piece is dropped into the slit below the locomotive will be put in motion. See! here comes a small boy with his mother. He looks with open mouth and bright eyes at the polished and plated engine. In his tour around the case he comes face to face with the notice. He spells it out with reluctantly given assistance from his mother. When he has fully comprehended the idea his sum of earthly happiness amounts to just five cents. He asks for the magic coin. Mother pleads hurry and tries to rush him on. He plants his feet like the little donkey that he can be, and demands the five cents.

At last, when it is evident that no persuasion will move him, the poor, abused infant is given the "nickel," he jams it into the slit, there is a momentary rattling, then the bright wheels revolve swiftly to a lively air from a music-box concealed beneath the track. This exhibition lasts for five minutes, and then all is quiet until another coin calls the engine into action.

This simple device supplies the place of an attendant, and at the same time forms an attraction in itself.

A similar plan has been applied to scales standing in public places. The man who wants to know how much he has lost by overwork, and the blushing girl who is sure she "gained awfully," mount the platform, drop a "nickel" into the slit, and watch a pointer advance along the dial until it comes to a stand at the proper numeral. The overworked man steps wearily down and goes away saying, "Just as I expected," while the girl jumps down indignantly, declares the scales are not right, and expresses skepticism in "a thing that works like that anyhow."

We have now taken two steps toward our clerkless shop. In the first case the purchaser helped himself to an exhibition and a concert, in the second to a bit of personal information. Both of these devices are to be found in the United States; the others that we shall describe may be there too, but they are not in such general use as in England.

A company has been formed to provide at railway stations and other public places self-tending post-offices. The offices are iron boxes painted a bright red. They are about four feet high, and are firmly screwed to the floor. There are one, two, or three drawers, according to the extent of the business to be done. If only post-cards are furnished, there is only one drawer. Suppose a man is anxious to send word to some friend on a matter of business, hardly important enough for a telegram. He is at a railway station and has a few moments to spare. He wants a post-card. He goes to the red box, drops a penny into the slit, and then pulls out the drawer with the card lying upon it. In the same way he may get an envelope, stamp, and sheet of writing paper.

At many stations of the under-ground railways in London there are boxes of sweets, from which a penny will extract butter-scotch or chocolate. The idea is spreading rapidly, and before long people will be able to buy any thing. Think of the perfection that will be attained when a man can put his measure and fifty dollars in the top of a "self-serving tailor box" and take a finished suit out of a drawer in the bottom! Imagine the happiness of the ladies when they

can put some fabulous sum of money in a tall iron band-box affair and draw out the latest Paris bonnet!

England has done well in starting this plan; let us as Americans prove our ability to make broad applications in every branch of trade. The day may dawn when the merchants will simply fill up their boxes in the morning, and after a day of luxurious repose or recreation draw out their profits at night.

There is one limitation to the success of these machines. The sum of money paid must be comparatively small, or swindlers will manufacture counterfeit coins which can work the mechanism like honest money. Therefore the first step for aspiring inventors is to devise a machine which shall reject counterfeits.

This kindly hint is given free of charge, and is accompanied by best wishes for success.

THE SWEETEST SONG.

BY MARY A. P. STANSBURY.

"Now, who is it fain would enter?"
The stately singer said.
"I am weary of goers and comers,
And the day is well-nigh fled."

"It is only a boy, my lady;
But when I would bid him go,
So sad were his eyes and pleading,
I could not answer him 'No!' "

"A child?" Then the weary accents
Rang clear and glad once more,
And the beautiful eyes grew tender
With a light from the days of yore.

"O, hasten and bid him enter!
For children are dear to me,
Who played, in life's happy morning,
At my father Garcia's knee!"

Full softly he crossed the threshold.
His small, brown feet were bare,
And over his tattered jacket
Swept low his golden hair.

Blue were his eyes as the hare-bell
In the rocky cleft that grows,
And the eager bloom on cheek and lip
Glowed like the heart of a rose.

Fair as a dream from heaven
He saw the lady stand,
And a bit of crumpled paper
He laid in her outstretched hand.

"My mother is sick, dear lady!
We have no fire or food;
And you, who sing like the angels,
Like them must be kind and good.

"And so I have dared to bring you
This little song I made—
Surely, now that you smile upon me,
I cannot be afraid!

"If only once you would sing it,
Perhaps some one would buy;
And with bread and medicine, lady,
My mother need not die!"

Half under her breath she murmured
The little, simple strain—
So, a bird astir at midnight
Might sing and sleep again.

"My child, whence came it—tell me!
This music—and the words?"
"The brook sang so, my lady,
The wind and the morning birds!"

With her lips she touched his forehead,
From her beauty's shining height;
"My maid shall watch your mother,
Come, you, to me to-night!"

The city's wealth and beauty
Had thronged the concert-hall,
And the boy, in a wide-eyed wonder,
Gazed silently over all.

Hark! a breathing of flute and cornet!
A tremor of harp and viol!
Like the breeze in the tops of the forest
When the dawn begins to smile.

Then, sweet as the song of the throstle,
Sad as the whip-poor-will's plaint,
A silvery melody stealing
From the distance far and faint!

His heart stood still in his bosom,
For she—she was standing there,
In the pride of her peerless beauty,
With gems ablaze in her hair.

From floor to the vaulted ceiling
The place with welcome rang!
She turned and smiled on the breathless child—
What was it that she sang?

His song—his own! Yet sweeter—
A hundred times more sweet!
So still the room that almost
He heard his pulses beat.

One sob he could not stifle—
He felt his eyes grow dim!
A hundred sobs made answer—
A thousand wept with him!

Next morn, the narrow chamber
And the mother's poor bedside
By the singer's gracious presence
Were blessed and glorified.

And the song of the wind and water
And the birds of the morning-land,
Into glistening gold transmuted,
She laid in the wasted hand.

Long after the voice of the singer
Sang only in memory,
Stood a choir of children's children
At the great composer's knee.

"Now, grandpapa, you must teach us—
For we have studied long—
Out of all your beautiful music
The very sweetest song!"

The old man's noble features
A tender brightness wore;
He turned the leaves of a ponderous book
Till he came to a simple score.

He traced the notes with his finger,
As if once more he wrote,
And he looked on the children's faces,
Like one that saw them not.

"The sweetest song?" he murmured,
"Sing that—there is none who can—
For where is the ear of little Pierre,
Or the voice of Malibran?"

MISTAKES.

BY WOLSTAN DIXEY.

THE man that never makes mistakes never makes any thing. He is of no use in this poor, blundering world. Not that I have any thing against him, O no! I have never even seen him, but I have heard about him. I met a fellow only yesterday who thought he was a twin brother to the man that never makes any mistakes. But he wasn't, and there was mistake number one. Then I began to watch this fellow and to count, and in less than half an hour he had made more real shameful blunders than any body I met that day.

And this is a fact I have often noticed: The man or boy that is quite sure he don't know how to make a mistake piles them up faster than any body else. But they are not big mistakes; no, indeed! They are little ones, just about the size of a very little man. The large errors are usually made by the large men. There was the great soldier Napoleon. He made a monstrous blunder when he went to Russia; and, as nearly as we can find out, General Grant made another at Shiloh. Now you and I wouldn't have got into any such hole—we know better. And yet if we should stand on each other's shoulders it probably wouldn't make as big a man as either of these.

Mistakes, slips, errors, blunders—they will creep in, and it only makes matters worse to pretend that you are different from other people and never get your foot into the wrong boot. But don't be ashamed of it, and don't be afraid of it; go right ahead and do the best you can. A locomotive engine without any fire will never go off the track; but that isn't the kind of an engine you want to be. If you go at all, you are liable sometimes to go wrong, but be always ready to come back again when you know it.

But there is one class of mistakes that it is worth while to be afraid of and ashamed of: the mistakes of selfishness, and meanness, and cowardice. Yes, dread these and despise them, and go slow when you come to them. They are bad mistakes to make.

FUN'S THANKSGIVING.

BY MARY H. MATHER.

"THERE, room-mate, that is to tell that big brother of mine to expect us at Centerville Station on the evening of November twenty-fifth, eighteen hundred and eighty-six. Long live his Excellency the President of the United States! Don't I just know how he will look in his brown overcoat as he takes off his hat to you?"

"Who?" laughed Jean—"his excellency or your brother? That sentence would make a fine example for the rhetoric class."

"You know I meant Ned, and who cares for rhetoric when Thanksgiving is only four days off?" and Molly vigorously sealed and stamped her letter, giving it a loving little pat as she dropped it between the leaves of her history note-book.

"O, who will lend me a postal-card?" chanted Evelyn Richardson from the hall without.

"Come in and borrow ten, if you like," called Molly, "for I shall not need to use another one for eleven whole days. Aren't you sorry, Evelyn, that you are a wild Westerner and are too far from home for a glimpse of the buffaloes at Thanksgiving?"

Thus challenged, Evelyn made an indignant assertion to the effect that St. Louis was the very center of civilization, and further assured Molly that all those who were to be so basely deserted by their friends during the holidays were plotting to have a much better time than the recreants themselves; whereupon began an argument which was carried on with much animation until brought to a timely end by the ringing of the chapel bell.

This caused a great rush for note-books, pens, shawls, and coats, and was followed by the sound of many feet on the stairs and along the porch of Hoover Hall.

Just at this time in the morning the campus of Hill College presented a very picturesque sight, lighted up by the bright shawls and "Tams" of the hosts of girls pouring out of the numerous dwelling-houses and hastening by ones and twos and threes over to the chapel hall. A last warning tap of the bell quickened the footsteps of any belated maiden, and a moment after the campus was utterly deserted.

As the old, familiar words of the service rang out that morning, sung by a hundred young and happy voices, there seemed to Molly a meaning in them that she never had fully appreciated before, and as she sang,

"Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,"

it was with a radiant inner vision of the dear faces so soon to greet her once more.

That afternoon somebody brought a letter from the college post-office over to Molly Kent, a letter that was post-marked "Centerville. It found her and Jean deep in the mysteries of a costume in which Molly was to appear in some historical tableaux that evening as the fair but unfortunate Mary Queen of Scots.

The problem in hand was the all-absorbing one of applying shoe-blacking to white canton-flannel in such a realistic fashion as to leave upon the audience the impression that the royal lady's robe was bordered with ermine of the richest quality.

It was so unusual a time for Molly to get a letter from home that she opened it at once, and had not read far before such a look of consternation overspread her face that Jean exclaimed in alarm,

"What is it?"

"Measles!" answered Molly, in such a tragic tone that her room-mate stood transfixed, the shoe-blacking brush suspended in air, regardless of the ermine's imminent danger.

"Who?" she asked, with bated breath.

"Betty and Ben and Bob," read Molly, a climax of despair in her tone, "and mother says —" Molly shut her lips tightly and gazed out of the window over at the grim old top of Desolate Mountain while there flashed through her mind the thought that it was rightly named after all.

"It's no use," she said, at last; "the Thanksgiving is all spoiled."

"O dear," said Jean, sympathetically.

"Mother says it is a terrible disappointment to them all, and the children are almost heart-broken, but that it would not do for us to run the risk of coming home at present; and we can't go to Uncle Ned's, for they all start for Florida on Monday. And we were to have had such a good time, and the boys and the children are so anxious to see you! Mother says, 'Tell Miss Jean we shall hope for better things at Christmas-time,' but Christmas—that is a whole eon away."

Molly threw herself on the lounge in mute despair.

"I'm going down to the bridge," she said, at length, and disappeared into the depths of the closet after her boots and ulster.

The bridge was a remedy for many a woe. If the day's recitation or examination had been a failure; if the home-letter had not arrived at the usual time; if one's room-mate had proved a weariness to the flesh; if one were blue from any cause whatsoever, the bridge was an ofttime resort and consolation.

After a walk in the clear, cold air and a view of the beautiful river, life generally began to brighten and to glow once more with color.

But in this case even the bridge proved unavailing, and that night Mary Queen of Scots wore an expression of tragic despair not altogether assumed.

The next day was a dreary one for the inmates of "No. 23, Hoover Hall." Both of them declared afterward that they never could bear to remember that cold, gray Sunday.

At last evening came, and Molly, who had been roaming restlessly about, announced her intention of going over to the Hepbourne House, where Miss Hobart, the rhetoric teacher, was to have one of her "twilight talks" with the girls.

Jean had a headache, so Molly tucked her up on the lounge and left her to rest.

In about an hour the door was opened by an energetic young maiden who said,

"Jean Fletcher, if you hadn't a headache I would ask you to shake me. What do you suppose Miss Hobart talked about? *Contentment!* Wasn't that a regular 'irony of fate,' as Ned would say, after I had been grumbling to myself as hard as ever I could for the last twenty-four hours? But I can just tell you that the very last grumble grumbled, and the last blue streak faded. When Miss Hobart told us—but wait—don't you remember that little, brown house over by the railroad when we went for clematis on Mountain Day, the one where Lottie Gregory wondered if any body lived? Well, I should think somebody did; there is a mother with four children who have just lost their father, and the little one, room-mate—the very little one—is just the age of our small Dot at home; and while I have been spending my time in grumbling those small children and that poor mother have been half-starving and freezing for want of food and clothes. Miss Hobart used the story simply as an illustration, but it seemed to me that somebody ought to take it in the light of an absolute fact. Don't you think we could do something to help?"

"We might devote our car-fares at least to the work," suggested Jean, "since we are deprived of the opportunity of using them at present, and I am sure that our motion would give us something in the way of food."

"Brilliant ideas!" said Molly. "Evolve some more of the same kind while I put a postscript to my letter and tell mother that after all the measles may turn out to be a 'specious providence.' "

After some discussion it was finally decided that two other kindred spirits should be acquainted with the plan, and at odd moments during the next two days the four girls might have been seen in earnest consultation over the cutting out and fashioning of various small garments.

When the other girls demanded what was going on, Molly always answered, "O, we're sewing for Fun."

"Because," she said to the others, "we don't want to publish our work abroad, and since we don't know what the small destitute's name is, we have, logically, no reason for supposing that it is not Fun," and the three others adopted the supposition.

It was a little hard on Wednesday to see the girls whose brothers and sisters were not afflicted with the measles roll out of the college-grounds in hacks to the station; but with Fun's little dress only half-finished there was not much time for despondency, and the girls were soon hard at work.

They had just reached the absorbing subject of button-holes, when the familiar tread of the express-man—a sound always hailed with delight—was heard in the hall.

"It is! it is!" exclaimed Molly, ecstatically, as the sound came nearer and nearer, and cotton and scissors flew in all directions while she rushed to the door to receive a huge box bearing her name and Jean's in Ned's best hand-writing.

"It's from home!" Molly exclaimed. "Daisy Dunton, do lend me your hammer, and we will have it open in less than no time."

Daisy flew for the hammer, and then they all stood round in excited surmise while Molly pried off the lid.

"A turkey!" was the first announcement.

"Turkey!" echoed a chorus of admiring voices.

"A great box-full of Delia's cookies!"

"Cookies!" repeated the chorus with animation.

"Rolls, cakes, caramels, apples, and—a whole jar of olives!"

The last announcement swelled the chorus to such an emphatic "O!" that the girl next door who was studying away for an extra examination pounded on the wall for silence.

What a box that was! Nothing that could cheer the hearts of the girls had been forgotten, and away down in the bottom was a bundle of small hoods and mittens marked "For the 'Specious Providence,' " and a grand collection of old picture books sent by request of the afflicted trio.

"Girls," said Molly, as she lifted out the last package and gazed around at the over-flowing tables and chairs, "I know now just how a poor home missionary away out on the frontier feels when he gets a box from some church or other. You know they always say in their letters of acknowledgment, 'Words are inadequate to express our feelings,' and I can at this moment heartily sympathize with them in that declaration. Let us now resolve ourselves into a committee of invitation."

Thus they did, and in less than an hour there were tucked under the doors of the maidens fortunate enough to be invited little cards cut into the form of plates, bearing around their edges the alluring legend:

"*A box from home. Number Twenty-three, Hoover Hall.* 7:30–9:30. *Come.*"

To tell of that spread and of the good time thereat, of the songs sung and the jokes perpetrated, time does not permit. Even Molly did not get more than a brief mention of it in her "memorabilia" book. Nevertheless it was a "highly delicious lark," and one that was long remembered.

Yet there was an hour the next morning that meant to four of the girls more than did all the fun of the night before. They were those who saw a rare guest enter the door of the little, old brown house by the railroad; a guest whose name was Joy, and who had magic in his touch, for all at once the despairing look in the face of the crippled mother was changed to an expression of relief, and tearful, little faces took on sunny smiles of gladness.

And Fun—well, he was a picture never to be forgotten, as clad in his new red dress he crowed his thanks from the arms of his diminutive elder sister, who bravely held him up to the window that he might wave a last good-bye to the "kind young ladies."

"Room-mate," said Molly, that night, in the confidential few minutes after the lights were out, "I have made three discoveries and one resolve."

"What are they?" asked Jean.

"Number one, the surprising extent to which car-fares will go when appropriated to the purchase of fuel, clothes, and food. Number two, the dense ignorance on the part of one individual of the human race regarding the fact that Thanksgiving really means 'a giving of thanks.' Number three, the astonishing effect upon abyssmal blueness of doing something for somebody, and hence my resolve."

Molly hesitated a moment.

"Hence your resolve," prompted Jean.

"To cork up in some safe corner of my mind for future reference a small bottle marked, 'Fun's Thanksgiving.' "

PRACTICAL JOKES.

BY JUNIUS P. LEACH.

HOWEVER amusing practical jokes may be to the perpetrators of them, they are always unpleasant, perhaps actually painful, to the victim—ay, more: they are often absolutely dangerous and inflict lasting injury or sudden death.

A case in point occurred in Schuyler County, Illinois. Two men were engaged in digging a well. After getting down some fifteen or twenty feet they came to rock which it was necessary to blast out. Having no fuse, their method of procedure was, while tamping the charge in, to leave a narrow vent, which was filled with powder, and powder being

then thickly sprinkled all over the top of the rock and connecting with this vent it was easily ignited from the top by pitching down a shovelful of live coals, after the man in the well had been taken out. The tamper, whose name was Cameron, had thus prepared a blast, when the foolish fellow whom he had for a partner to manage the windlass at the top conceived a brilliant idea for having a little "fun" at his expense, for the amusement of the party of loungers accustomed to hang around such places. Going to an ash-hopper where cold ashes were kept, he scooped up a shovelful of ashes and *dead* coals, and approaching the mouth of the pit called down,

"Tom, are you ready?"

"Yes," replied Cameron, thinking he was asked if he was ready to be hoisted out.

"Well, then, stand aside," drawled the simple bumpkin, as he dumped in the dead coals.

Poor Cameron! He made no outcry as he wildly strove to scale the crumbling wall of clay to escape the expected explosion. It was all too terribly real to him to waste breath in useless clamor. But when he dropped fainting at the bottom and one of the louts was lowered in the tub to bring him up, the marks on the face of the clay to a height of nearly fifteen feet testified alike to the completeness of the deception, his superhuman efforts to avoid a horrible death, and the agony of his torture.

Men laughed when they heard of the cruel incident, but to his dying day Tom Cameron never fully recovered from the nervous shock.

A STREET PICTURE IN NAPLES.

(*From the German of Paul Heyse.*)

Two beggar boys I noticed in the street,
Both clad in tatters, one with shoeless feet;
The other's shoes, so worn and ripped and rent
They scarcely held together as he went.

Yet his companion enviously eyed
His richer brother, strutting in his pride;
For though much mangled by Time's keen-edged tooth,
The shoes had charms to tempt a barefoot youth.

And the first coppers begged from passers-by
He gave a boot-black, while his heart beat high,
Telling the world with a triumphant grin
The fortune that he happened to be in—
"The man with shoes can pay to have them shine;
Nobles and princes wear such shoes as mine."

WHAT THE QUEEN MIGHT DO.

We Americans are in the habit of saying that royalty is merely a tangible tradition, and that Queen Victoria has really no more power than the president whom we make ourselves every four years. An English paper, as if in reply to this wide-spread idea, states what her majesty might do. We cannot help thinking that the queen, if she threatened to do any of these terrible things, would be in the position of the Irishman who, when being pulled from a well shouted to the men,

"Pull faster, will yez, or I'll cut the rope."

In these days one hears a great deal about the power of the people; never a word, however, about the power of the crown, unless it be the information that such power is merely nominal and is ever diminishing. Now, it may surprise many to know that the queen might, without consulting the people, disband the army and dismiss all the officers. She is not allowed to engage more than a certain number of soldiers, certainly, but as the same time she is not obliged to engage any. Then again her majesty could dismiss all the sailors, and could sell all our ships of war and all our naval stores. To say, then, that the queen has no power is to say what is scarcely correct. Moreover, she might make peace at any time by the cession of Cornwall, and might enter upon a war for the conquest of Brittany without asking yea or nay from the people. Then she could make any or every citizen, male and female, in the United Kingdom a peer; she could create in every parish a university; she could discharge most of the civil servants; and she could pardon all offenders. In the words of Sir Erskine May, "She could upset all the action of civil government within the government; could disgrace the nation by a bad war or a disgraceful peace; and could leave us defenseless by land or sea." Fortunately, our queen has always proved herself to be a model of patriotism.

NOT MORE THAN ONCE.

The old doctrine that kings are infallible gives rise to peculiar situations. When the infallible one makes what the irreverent would call a mistake, instead of yielding to circumstances he causes the circumstances to be molded to suit himself, and his infallibility is intact.

The following story is told of the Emperor Wilhelm, who, having saved his reputation once, was not to be caught again:

Some years ago Kaiser Wilhelm held a reception at Bonn. One of the officers who had the honor of being presented had been hitherto unknown to the emperor, and the adjutant, who had made inquiries, whispered to his majesty, "Has just been promoted captain." The emperor spoke kindly to the young man, and complimented him on his promotion. Quite startled at the happy news, the officer, whose turn had not yet come to be raised to a captaincy, hastened to report the matter to the colonel, who lost no time in seeking an interview with the adjutant, when it turned out that the latter had mistaken the young lieutenant for his elder brother, who had been recently advanced to the rank of captain. The adjutant penitently confessed his mistake to the emperor. But his majesty only smiled, saying: "If I have complimented Herr M. on his promotion, it must remain so." Not long since there was a levée at court. Herr von B., who had recently been promoted to the rank of major, appeared, still wearing a captain's uniform, and was presented to the emperor. Again the adjutant whispered, "Has just been promoted major." The emperor turned round with a knowing smile and said, in genuine Berlinese: "Nay, my good friend, not to be caught this time."—*Bonner Zeitung.*

POPULOUS MALTA.

An interesting scrap of information regarding the most populous district in the world is copied from the journal of the iron trade:

It has been for a long time asserted and believed that the island of Barbadoes, with 166 square miles and a population of 175,000, which is 1,054 persons to the square mile, was the most densely inhabited portion of the earth's surface. From a communication of Mr. John Worthington, the Consul of the United States at Valetta, Malta, it appears that in the matter of density of population Barbadoes must yield the palm to Malta. That island contains 95 square miles of surface and contains 142,500 inhabitants (exclusive of the British garrison and visitors and non-residents), which is an average of 1,500 to the square mile. The city of Valetta contains a great plethora of population, its area being 0.318 square mile, and its population 24,854, a population of 78,157 persons to the square mile. There is one specially populous quarter of Valetta, known as the Manderaggio, the area of which is 0.004 square mile, or 2.56 acres, wherein dwell 2,544 persons—a proportion of 636,000 souls to the square mile. If we exclude the one third of the island which is unsuitable for cultivation and the area occupied by buildings, the population of Malta reaches the large number of 2,000 persons to the square mile.

A DRY RIVER.

President Lincoln once said, on being shown a badly-painted picture, "That artist is a good man. He has observed the commandments. He has not made unto himself any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth!" The same remark might be made concerning the picture mentioned in this paragraph:

An eminent French art collector once bought in Paris a landscape by a noted "impressionist," which he showed, with much pride in his purchase, to an artist friend.

"But I think," quoth he, "that the picture lacks animation—it wants personages. Now, if you would paint for me a man or woman on that road that runs through the middle of the landscape, it would greatly improve the picture."

"That is easily done," said the artist; so he carried off the painting, and sent it back in a week or two with a figure of an old peasant woman going to market with her basket and her red umbrella introduced on the road in question, to the great satisfaction of the picture's proprietor. Meeting shortly after with the "impressionist" who had painted it, the artist remarked, "I had the audacity to alter a landscape of yours belonging to M. X. the other day. I painted an old peasant woman walking down the road."

"Down the road?" I remember no work of mine with a road in it. I should like to see the picture and judge of the effect of your alteration."

So the artist carried him off to M. X.'s, and they speedily stood before the landscape. The "impressionist" turned perfectly green with wrath and horror.

"Miserable man!" he shouted, "what have you done? That is not a road that runs through the center of my work; it is a river!"

Our Youth.

A PAPER FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR TEACHERS.

JOHN H. VINCENT, EDITOR.

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THERE are reasons enough for Thanksgiving, and for observing Thanksgiving days. Every body can find the reasons if he wants to find them. They are thick-strown as stars above our heads, and as blades of grass beneath our feet. Yes, in every life. We know poor people who are always thankful—thankful for what little they have; thankful for what that little is to them; thankful that they have not so much as to be hurt by abundance; thankful for what they see beyond their visible resources, and, above all, thankful for the unbounded wealth which they are sure is laid up for them in the eternal future. We know confirmed invalids whose beds are made comparatively soft and comfortable by the grateful love of their hearts. They might be so much worse. In view of that, they are so well off. Count the friends that call and the letters that come. The doctor—how jolly he is and how hopeful! And the minister—how sympathetic and how helpful! And the neighbors—what dainty tid-bits and what sweet-smelling flowers they send in! Even a hard lot has its reasons for gratitude, and the saints I speak of find them just as in certain rocky regions soil somehow settles in the crevices and on narrow natural terraces, and the first thing you know the rugged cliff is smiling with vines and green leaves and flowerets. Do you not know such pleasant souls? They *want* Thanksgiving days!

SOMETIMES the least thankful and the most complaining are the people whose lives are crowded with "good things." No aches, no sleepless hours, no hunger that may not be satisfied, no care of deformed or idiotic children, no solicitude about money, no heavy burdens—no *really* heavy burdens—no new-made grave yonder in the cemetery to swallow up the possible joy of every day; well-to-do, plenty to do. Why should they not be full of thanksgiving? But they are not. They see every thing through blue glasses. Green grass—blue; fair lilies and royal roses—blue; blue sky—blue-black; faces of best friends—blue. The weather is bad even when you think it tolerably good weather. It will storm before night—even though the sun comes up unveiled over the hills and looks out on a cloudless sky. The cook might have done better—when every body else has full proof that she has done her best. Poor sermon—that every body liked. So it goes in little matters and in great, in-doors and out, at home and abroad. "What's the use of Thanksgiving days? Who's got any thing to be thankful for—that is, if he has sense enough to see how bad every thing is? Thanksgiving days tend to dissipation. Men overeat on such days. Children, indulged too much at these times, are spoiled; and they turn liberty into license. Preachers use the occasion for preaching political sermons and stirring up a contentious spirit in the church. Laboring men get a taste of rest and return reluctantly to their work, or they get drunk and waste their money." Have you never heard such melancholy complainers? They *need* Thanksgiving days!

OUT of the personal life grows the social or national institution. Individual desire and effort after freedom, in course of time, develops into resolve, personal and associated; then into open expression; then into resistance to tyranny; then into bold assault, and in due time—great days commemorate great deeds. From the root of personal determination blossomed the "Day of Independence"—our American "Fourth of July." In the heavens there was One who looked with pity on our race, and who planned with wisdom for our deliverance. He came one night—"a holy thing" from a Virgin's womb—and now "Christmas day" dawns, a day of gladness on all Christendom. So "Thanksgiving day" was established. Grateful hearts in the days that antedate the republic, moved with gratitude to the God of heaven—who had guided them in safety across the stormy Atlantic, who had given them homes on the rugged New England coasts, who had protected them from famine and frost and savage tribes—instituted the day of public and social and personal thanksgiving. The churches were opened, the bells rung a call to prayer and praise, and the old and the young came together. The ministers, true to their calling, set forth the providence of God, proclaimed his mercy, and warned the people by the remembrance of his justice. The people sang psalms of praise to the Maker and Redeemer of men, and went to their homes like the Israelites of old to eat and to drink and to make merry. The old Thanksgiving days are not to be forgotten. They have been embalmed in essay, story, and song. Family histories are full of them. To this day the ancient forms and customs are observed. From New England with New England ideas the institution has extended, until the local provision has become national. May the Thanksgiving day ever be observed in all parts of the republic!

WHAT began in the individual heart and grew up into a national institution must not lose its place in the heart from which it sprang. The institution has value only as it expresses and reacts upon the personal life. Thanksgiving day must be a day of real thanksgiving, and must therefore have its roots in the hearts of the people. Bells cannot give thanks, nor can organs. Spires that reach up toward heaven cannot touch the throne of God. Music and architecture are dead things. Only when the human heart uses them for religious ends are they of any religious value. Our Thanksgiving days must be days of true thanksgiving. And true thanks are heart-fruit. The head cannot give thanks, nor can the hands, nor even the voice. The heart—the heart, the HEART—must feel the gratitude which the lips express. See the organist yonder at his organ, music open before him, feet on pedals. How he works! He treads for dear life, and presses down of the banks of keys—now the upper, now the lower, now both. His face grows red with the exertion. He is accurate in every touch. He keeps perfect time. He uses this stop and that, according to the directions of the composer, whose masterpiece he is trying to reproduce. But with all his effort he produces no music; not even a sound. His organ is dead. No breath is in its boxes, its bellows, or its pipes. The heart of the thing is out of it, and the push and pressure and performance of the musician is all panto-

mime—to lookers-on a ridiculous pretense. Such are Thanksgiving days and Thanksgiving services without heart, without feeling, without religious power in the man who professes and pretends to give praise.

How shall we cultivate the spirit of thanksgiving? Do you really care to do it? Then we will tell you. You must have a true faith in an overruling God, who is the Father of men, and who, in his own way (sometimes a very strange way, it seems to us) is planning for their best good. He is an actual Being—omnipotent, incomprehensible, personal, loving, and infinitely wise. What he hides from us of his ways and of his purposes we shall sometime in a measure understand. "What thou knowest not now, thou shalt know hereafter." It is to Him we give thanks. We lift up our faces, our voices, our thoughts, our desires, toward his infinite mystery and love, and say, "For all that life is to us; for all that it might be to us if we would only now conform to thine order; for all that it is to be; for health and food, for home and friends, for love given and love returned, for memory and hope, for light and art, for literature and liberty, for the Man of Nazareth and the Lamb on the throne, for the Book of books and for the Spirit that is in the Book, for the hope of heaven, and, above all, for the grace that forgiveth sin and giveth peace and purity—we thank thee, O God, through Jesus Christ, human and divine, Redeemer, Intercessor, King. Amen." Thinking this prayer of praise, and desiring to feel every syllable of it in our hearts, we shall grow into a mood, a spirit, a life of thoughtful thanksgiving.

There is another way to promote a spirit of thanksgiving. The one we have given puts you in the attitude of a receiver, accepting. Now put yourself in the attitude of a giver, bestowing. To know love you must love. To appreciate Him who gives, you, too, must give. Then on Thanksgiving day—give. Give to some one else—something. Just what God gives, and as God gives, you may not be able to give; but you can give something. Give a pleasant "Good-morning," even though you feel stupid or sullen or half-asleep, or though you are cross and don't want to notice any body and don't care to be noticed. Now put on a smile. Force it on. Then say "Good-morning!" Shake hands—especially if it would please somebody else to have you do it. Now, a kiss, if a kiss is proper under the circumstances. Now smile again. Hold on to that smile as long as you can. Let the muscles practice—smiling when the moodiness of the morning is on you. There—that is well done! A smile, a handshake, a kiss, another smile—all in spite of moods, and for the happiness of somebody else who smiles back and kisses you, and says out of a grateful heart, "Thank you!" Your Thanksgiving day has begun well. Now give words, kind words; give help; give others a good chance for some pleasure they could not have enjoyed but for you and your effort; give a bit of candy, or jelly, a loaf of bread, or a whole chicken to somebody who needs it. And when a human face looks into your face and somebody says "Thank you," then do you go to church and look up to the heavens and say, "I thank thee, O God, giver of all good, who makest it possible for us, even me, to be in my small measure like unto thee—a giver of good." Then there will be breath in the organ, and melody and harmony. And the praise of the congregation will be sweet. And the colors and forms in the very windows of the church will be as psalms of beauty, silent yet melodious, and full of the heart's thanksgiving.

God give the readers of Our Youth a wise and glad Thanksgiving day!

OUR BEREAN HOMILY.

Lesson for November 28, 1886. John's Vision of Christ.—Rev. i. 4–18. Golden Text.—Rev. i. 18.

Prefatory. Once when John the Baptist drew near to his day of death he sent certain of his disciples to Jesus to get word from him—some new word of cheer to confirm his own faith and to confirm the faith of his disciples. And Jesus sent the word. He wrought wondrous works of healing, and sent John's followers back, saying, "Go tell John the things which ye have heard and seen." They had a great deal to tell. O to have been with John in the castle of Machærus that day, and to have watched his face as the returned pilgrims rehearsed the story of their visit—how the Lord received them; how he looked; what questions he asked; what wonders he performed; what message he sent! Was John—the other John—standing by as his Master worked out his answer for the Baptist's disciples? Did he wonder that the forerunner should lack faith?

The years have gone by—decades, almost scores of years—since John Baptist's head went to Herod's court and his soul to the court of heaven. The Worker of miracles whose deeds and words had confirmed the faith of John's disciples had gone out into the Invisible, and John the Evangelist lingered, old and exiled. Among the rocks of Patmos he dwelt, a companion of believers in tribulation, a faithful disciple, full of the Spirit, and a lover of the Church. To him there came a manifestation of the Wonder-worker—the same who confirmed John's faith, "the same yesterday, to-day, and forever." The lesson gives an account of this manifestation.

Interrogatory. What John was this? Name the seven churches. Repeat the salutation of verse 4. How is Jesus Christ described in verse 5? What honor does he give his people? Verse 6. What prediction concerning him in verse 7? Quote verse 8. How does John describe himself and his circumstances? What did the voice say to him? Turning, what did he see? How did the vision affect him? What did Jesus say to him?

Homily. There is nothing too wonderful to believe in this vivid and splendid picture of the revelation which Jesus gave of himself to John on the isle of Patmos. Great poets who have proved their power do not surprise you by a new poem of great beauty. You expect it.

The wonder is in the poet himself. Knowing him and what he has done, you do not wonder at the new thing he does. Jesus is the Wonder. Given himself—and you are not surprised at his miracles, at his transfiguration, at his resurrection, at his ascension, at this coming again in the glory of Patmos. It was like him to appear to John. His "Fear not" had a familiar sound. The glory of heaven had not changed him. He could not be changed. In the flesh on earth his divinity was veiled. Now he takes off the veil. No human comparisons can describe the splendors of his person. "Golden," "white," "snow," "flame of fire," "burnished brass" (N. V.), "stars," "sword," "the sun shineth in his strength." There are the most brilliant figures human language can frame to set forth purity, power, splendor. They cannot define him. They simply envelope him in dazzling light. The King is here—King of kings and Lord of lords. And he says, "Fear not." The Sun cheering a floweret. The King in regal robes and under a crown too glorious for human eyes to look upon, putting his hand gently on an orphan's head, and saying, "I am thy friend." "Was dead." A fact. Nature witnessed it, and grew black as night at midday. His foes saw it, and rejoiced while they trembled. His friends saw it, and could not even hope. "I am he that liveth," liveth to love, liveth to help, liveth to give life. "I am alive for evermore." Eternal life! When all his murderers are dead he will still live. When the scepter and crown have fallen from imperial Rome he will still live. When the earth is cold with age and burned with fire he shall still cry, "I am alive forever." "Have the keys"—the authority and the power infinite, immeasurable, eternal. Wonderful Christ! Who will receive him?

Prayer. O Thou who art the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, the Lord which is and which was and which is to come, the Almighty, the first and the last, alive for evermore, having the keys of hell and of death, the faithful witness, the first begotten of the dead, the prince of the Kings of the earth: To Thee be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. Put Thy right hand upon us and say, "Fear not," and may we be washed from our sins in Thine own blood and be made kings and priests unto God forever. Amen.

OUR NOTE-BOOK.

Here's the happiest of Thanksgivings to every reader of Our Youth.

Of course it will be a happy occasion. You can always be happy if you will pull the clouds apart a little so as to get a glimpse of the bright sides. Turn a moment from your daily cares and count up the blessings of the day. See if you wont feel like having a private Thanksgiving on the spot without the help of a turkey and the President's proclamation! And next Thursday when you try to remember a whole year's blessings—well, "glorious" is the only word to fit such an occasion.

THE OXFORD LEAGUE.

WHAT shall we do the coming winter for the building up of the Church life? A narrow, bigoted, belittling work we do not want. We want a large, noble, broad, active, spiritual, philanthropic life in connection with the denomination we belong to. We want all other Churches to be better and stronger because of our Church. But we do want, and we ought to want, our Church to be exceptionally good and strong and successful. And for this every body in the Church ought to work. Well, let us work for it. But how?

Let us carry on what we have already begun, and let us do it thoroughly. Begin with the public service. How may we fill up the pews to the profit of the people who are in them? We may fill them easily enough. Fun and eccentricity may do it. Certain kinds of music and of musicians in the choir may do it. But how fill them to profit? Let the preacher preach as well as he can—and that will be likely to be better than he ever preached before. Let him preach shorter sermons, with more practical points in them and more illustrations and more Scripture accurately quoted, and more doctrine and fewer words. Let him stop when he is done, and that will usually be before the people are wishing that he would stop. Let parents do their duty, and compel the children to attend church. Let the Sunday-school superintendent make so much ado about the public service that the young people and the children will want to go, or think that they ought to go. And let Sunday-school teachers keep urging and pleading with their pupils about it, all the time setting a good example. Announce the Sunday services in the weekly or daily papers (never on Sunday), and at the hotels and railway stations, and now and then put out posters, as they do in England, announcing who is to preach and on what subject. Rally the whole church about the Sunday morning preaching service! Pack the seats! Fill the aisles! Crowd the gallery! Buy cheap hymn books and give every stranger a copy. And then when the time for singing comes—SING! Every body SING! With such an opportunity the minister ought to be able to use it, or he ought to get out of the ministry. And if he can use it, he will be able to stir up the church to think, to feel, to resolve, and to make consecration of themselves to Christ and his cause.

This first thing we need the Oxford League for: To awaken the people in and out of the church, in and out of the Sunday-school, to the value of a great congregation on the Sabbath to hear God's word read and preached, and to join in prayer and praise. It would pay to organize an Oxford League in the church for this one purpose. Pastors, try it. Superintendents, try it at once.

In carrying on what we have already begun we must also make an effort this winter to fill the prayer-meeting. Here is the pastor's chance, and here is one of the heaviest tasks assigned him. He must be a good leader, not talking too much, not talking too long, and not allowing any body else to talk or pray beyond reasonable limits. He must see that the room is well aired and well lighted; that the meeting begins promptly and ends as promptly; that there are plenty of hymn-books (Epworth Hymnals), and that there is a good leader of singing. But the spirit of the meeting is the chief thing, and the spirit must be kindled by the Word. Warm hearts enjoy prayer-meetings. The Word is a fire. Have plenty of kindling—in statements about God, in promises of God. Read them, recite them, repeat them, expound them, and let the prayers be filled with them. What help there is in a good prayer-meeting! What a stupid thing a formal prayer-meeting is! Use the great congregation on Sunday as an opportunity for advertising the prayer-meeting on Tuesday or Wednesday or Thursday. Use the Sunday-school for the same purpose. Put the members of the Oxford League at work, and let every body this winter rally around the prayer-meeting. Oxford Leaguers, come to the rescue! Begin work at once.

We shall continue our remarks next week in the same general line. We are very anxious to have an organized Oxford League in every Methodist Episcopal Church—not as a new thing, not as an additional thing, but as the oldest device in Methodism, and as a means of increasing the power of agencies already organized.

Pastors, Superintendents, Teachers: Shall we have an Oxford League in your church? This winter? This week?

Do not let the worldly papers feel that the Church is willing to ask favors of them, or be in any way dependent upon them. Let us hire our own space, and let our Oxford League Press Committee keep that space well filled with useful notes.

THE SCHOOL AT HOME.

THE combination and separation of forces may be applied to many different cases. For example, let us suppose that a weight is suspended from a beam by two cords. These cords are fastened at points two feet apart upon the beam, and are brought together at the weight. It is evident that these two cords combine to produce exactly the same effect as though one stronger piece of rope were the sole support of the weight. The pull upon each of the two cords is less than that upon the single one, which represents the whole vertical strain.

Another familiar example may be found in the ordinary "sling-shot" so dear to boys of a certain age. This implement of warfare is composed of a crotch of wood, to the prongs of which are attached pieces of india rubber. The missile is placed in a leather cup, in which the rubber bands terminate. The method of discharging the "sling-shot" is as follows: The stone is placed in the socket, the lower prong of the crotch taken in the right hand and held in line with the mark, while the left draws back the elastic strings. When the mark is sighted the leather is released and the stone darts with great swiftness through the crotch and away. The effect upon the stone of these two rubbers is the same as would be exerted by a single and stronger rubber acting alone. In the latter case, however, there would be one difficulty. The *rubber could not get out of the way of the stone.* So this device is hit upon by which two impelling forces acting at different angles send the object in a line between them. Those boys who have "sling-shots" should get them out and illustrate for their sisters the experiment which has been described. The boys who are unfortunate enough to be without these engines of torture should learn at once to make them. Sometime we may give a minute description of how to make sling-shots in *Recreation.*

FALLING BODIES.

WE have considered motion or tendency to motion in bodies that are acted upon by forces such as wind, tide, tension, etc., and now come to an interesting subject—the motion of bodies moving under the influence of gravitation. Gravitation is the name given to a mysterious force which seems to draw masses of matter toward each other. It is generally agreed that this force keeps the heavenly bodies in their proper places, and is the controlling power of the material universe.

We all know how objects removed from the surface of the earth and carried to any height tend to return to the earth again. They do this under the influence of gravitation—it is the earth attracting these objects to itself—the large mass drawing the smaller.

There is a popular error about falling bodies to the effect that a large body will fall faster than a small. That is, if we were to take two stones, one weighing ten pounds and another five, to the top of a tower and drop them over at the same time, many people would suppose that the ten pounds would reach the earth before the five. In reality, so far as weight is concerned they would reach the earth at the same time. It is true that difference in shape might make some difference. If one stone were flat it might "scale" a little in its descent, and thus be delayed. The resistance of the air would make some difference, varying with the shape of the objects.

An experiment is often tried which shows that weight has nothing whatever to do with the relative speed of falling bodies. A feather and a copper cent are put into a long glass tube. When the tube is stood upon end the copper cent drops to the other end immediately, while the feather flutters down considerably later. This difference is due entirely to the air, to which the feather offers greater resistance, for when the air is exhausted from the tube by an air-pump the feather and the copper cent fall together. Of course, the forces with which the cent strikes the bottom of the tube is greater than that with which the feather reaches it, because of the difference in weight, but the speed of the two is the same.

RECREATION.

[*In this department we shall describe games old and new, for in-doors and out. Suggestions and comments from our subscribers will be welcome.*]

A FOOT-BALL GAME IN EDINBURGH.

ONE of our foreign correspondents sends us this account of a foot-ball game which he witnessed in the old Scotch city of Edinburgh:

There are two ways of playing foot-ball in Great Britain, by either the "Association" or the "Rugby" rules. The latter game is more popular in southern England, while in the north and in Scotland the Association rules are usually followed. The managers of the Edinburgh exhibition arranged a series of games to be played on their grounds between elevens from the city and vicinity, and in response to the mute invitation of a long line of "sandwich men" whom I met on Princess Street, I went out one afternoon to see a match between "The Heart of Midlothian" and the "Renwicks."

The field was surrounded by a strong barrier of wood which effectually prevented the large crowds of spectators from interfering with the game. After the usual time of waiting, during which the crowds amused themselves by shouting at each other in a rallying way, the two teams appeared. The "Midlothians" wore red and white suits, and had large red hearts on their left breasts; the Renwicks appeared in white knickerbockers and blue jerseys. Most of the players had cork leg-guards

strapped from the ankle to the knee, and all but the two goal-keepers were without hats or caps of any kind.

The "Association" rules are very simple, and there are few delays or discussions—frequent and unpleasant features of the "Rugby" game.

With the exception of the two goal-keepers—one for each side—no player is permitted to touch the ball with his hands or arms, although he may strike it with his head, shoulders, or body, and of course kick it with his feet. The goal-keepers may pick the ball up, bat it with the hand, kick it, or run with it. The goals are posts eight feet high, about sixteen feet apart, and their tops are connected by a horizontal beam. The ball must be kicked *between* the posts and *below* the bar to make a goal. When the ball is kicked out of bounds by one side, a player from the other team has the right to throw it in any direction he pleases.

After a little preliminary practice in which the players displayed their ability to manage the ball with their feet, passing, kicking, and stopping it in a very skillful way, the referee put a new ball—a round, leather-covered rubber bladder—in the center of the field, and the captain of the "Midlothians" made a long, low kick toward the "Renwick" goal. Then followed a wild scrimmage as the reds and blues struggled for possession of the coveted ball. At last a Renwick extricated the leather sphere and started down toward the red goal, kicking the ball skillfully before him. A cheer arose from the friends of Renwick, but died away as a red player stole the ball and sent it back with a long kick. So the battle raged. The "head play"—butting the ball with the head—was remarkable. When the ball was descending from a high kick the men jumped into the air, met the ball with their heads, and sent it spinning toward the enemy's goal. Or again a player would "block" a descending ball with his foot, bring it to a dead stop, and send it back—all in a second of time. Both sides displayed great agility, science, and endurance. After about ten minutes, the Midlothians succeeded by good play in sending the ball between their opponents' goal-posts and scoring the first point of the game.

The ball was put out in the center of the field again, and the game went on more furiously than ever. At the end of the "first half"—forty-five minutes—the score had not been changed, and the red hearts were jubilantly cheered by their followers.

After a rest of ten minutes, play was resumed, and the wearers of the blue went in to win. They played with great energy and daring. The running was swift, and the blue jerseys seemed to be every-where at once. In ten minutes the "Renwicks" rushed the ball down to the red goal, and by a swift, strong kick sent it through the posts, tieing the score, amid great excitement and prolonged cheers. A few minutes later the "Renwicks" again scored and won the game, no further points being made.

The Association game is safer than the Rugby, as there is no tackling or throwing. The one great danger of being kicked in scrimmages is largely done away with by the use of leg-guards. The kicking game is more exciting from the fact that the ball, as in lacrosse, passes rapidly from the vicinity of one goal to that of another, but the element of chance enters far more into the Association than into the Rugby game, and the latter is to my mind indisputably the more scientific and manly contest.

OUR GIRLS.

[*Contributions appropriate for this department, descriptions of fancy work, candy making, games, etc., are solicited from our readers.*]

THE KATY-DID SOCIETY.—XIV.

BY MARY H. MATHER.

WHAT happened at the next meeting of the K. D. S. was never known, from the fact that the whole society, with the addition of its brothers and sisters, began to envelop their proceedings in a shroud of mystery.

Aunt Katherine received a letter over which she smiled serenely, and then gave orders that the big music-room should be put in readiness for use on Thanksgiving Eve.

The fathers and the mothers looked on calmly, trying hard to appear regardless of the silesia, silver-paper, canton-flannel, and paste-board that turned up unexpectedly at all sorts of time and places. It was a little harder to seem unconscious of other unusual manifestations, such as the peals of laughter that came forth one evening from the room of the Brotherhood, accompanied by the scrapings of Hal's violin, and the injunction from somebody to "put another spot on his tail," and "to be careful of his whiskers."

But the mother of the Brotherhood was equal to the occasion, and was oblivion itself, feeling only too glad to have her boys engaged in such innocent enjoyment.

The excitement rose still higher on the day before Thanksgiving, and culminated in an extensive packing of all sorts of queer-shaped bundles. Two of the Brotherhood alarmed the rest by almost missing the Oakwood train, but they arrived just in time, lugging a huge round bundle wrapped in manifold newspapers.

When the family party reached Oakwood they found a warm welcome awaiting them from Aunt Katherine, and after a hurried consultation the young people set off for the woods, returning laden with evergreen boughs, with which they adjourned to the music-room.

That night, at tea, each of the guests found at his place a small card bearing an invitation to meet that evening some friends of his by-gone days. The words of the invitation came from the bill of a suggestive little goose in regard to which there were many comments and much merriment.

Punctually at eight o'clock the doors of the music-room were thrown open and the guests escorted by two young ushers to seats at one end of the room. When all were seated there was a sound of feet in the hall without, and the door at the other end opened to admit a little old woman, clad in the costume familiar to the eyes of childhood, the red skirt, black bodice, and pointed cap of—

"Mother Goose," murmured the approving audience.

"Dear friends," began the little lady, in a high-cracked voice, but with a briskness that could belong to none other than the energetic Kate, "a certain fairy, who shall be nameless, has summoned me from the regions of the past to bear you greeting to-night. With me are my many descendants, whom you shall soon see. My son, Jack, will be here presently to act as messenger. I left him searching for the golden egg."

"I've found it, mother; and the goose, too," said a boyish voice, and a lad with a blue feather in his cap came tripping in, carrying a huge white flannel goose under his arm, and in his hand an enormous golden egg.

Mother Goose greeted her namesake with animation, and placed it carefully by the side of her throne—a packing-box covered with evergreens—which she then ascended, while Jack, with a shiver, murmured something about its being "pretty cold in the sea."

"Summon the man in the moon," commanded Mother Goose.

Jack flew to the door, and making a trumpet out of his two hands shouted up into the air, "The Man in the Moon."

At the word the "Man in the Moon" stepped boldly in, a dark figure, bearing a huge, golden moon suspended from his shoulders, and bowing low before Mother Goose murmured pleadingly,

"Which is the way to Norwich?"

"You have come too soon," replied Mother Goose, in a pitying tone. "You will have to wait. If you will call the Lady from Banbury Cross we can have some music."

"I do not understand it," said the Man in the Moon, consulting a huge "railway guide" that hung at his side; and then with a disappointed air he went slowly to the door and called in a sad voice, "The Lady from Banbury Cross."

Suddenly the air was full of tinkling sounds, and the lady, who was Kitty, came in. Glowing jewels were on her fingers and little bells were on her dress and slippers, thus "making music wherever she went."

"Summon now the friends dear to youthful minds," said Mother Goose, giving three waves of her wand in the air.

The Banbury lady struck up a lively march on the piano, whereupon there entered a procession at which the audience of fathers, mothers, aunts, and uncles laughed until they cried. It seemed as if the pages of Mother Goose had become alive. There was Little Miss Muffet, a huge black paste-board spider hanging at her side, walking arm in arm with Little Jack Horner. Katherine, in an artistic costume suitable for the royal lady who has been for so many years "eating bread and honey," was engaged in social converse with the black-bird of ancient fame, but of modern manufacture out of black gossamers and brown paper bill.

Little Bo-peep passed by with Boy Blue; Bobby Shaftoe helped on the disabled Peg, while Tom Tucker escorted the fair Lucy Locket, whose famous pocket he dangled gracefully over one arm. Katherine as Mother Hubbard leaned upon the arm of Humpty Dumpty, while her dog brought up the rear with the "Cat and the Fiddle."

As each one in the procession reached the throne he bowed low before it, and then repeated the couplet or stanza representing his character. The lady with "pease porridge" had just finished describing its many merits when the renowned "pumpkin eater" came in dragging a small cart, on which reposed a huge pumpkin—a work of art—rattan and yellow calico. Peter began in a sepulchral tone,

> "'Peter, Peter, pumpkin eater,
> Had a wife and couldn't keep her;
> He put her in a pumpkin-shell,
> And there—'"

"He kept her very well," piped a small voice, while the curly head of Trot rose above the magnificence of the pumpkin in which she was safely seated.

This caused a round of applause that had barely ceased when there was rolled in a huge black shoe, in which sat a care-worn old woman of six surrounded by a large and unruly family of dolls. After each character had been introduced, Mother Goose, with another wave of her wand, called for some songs, and at the word "Mary, Mary, quite contrary" stepped forth, followed by the "pretty maids all in a row," and sang of her unique garden to the tune of the "Blue Alsatian Mountains." This was followed by the tale of Bo-peep's woes, a stirring story in which all joined to the tune of "Pop goes the weasel." "Jack and Jill's" fate was sung to the same air, and then came the adventures of "The little boy who lived by himself" to the tune of "Amaryllis."

The programme closed by the recital of the experiences of the little woman in the shoe, to the tune of the "Mocking Bird," after which the whole company joined hands, and the entertainment closed in a grand "ring a round a rosy."

THE OUTSIDE WORLD.

Algeria.

(Area, 122,877 sq. miles; population, 3,310,412; ruler, French Governor-General.)

ALGERIA, the most important of the foreign possessions of France, lies upon the northern coast of Africa, and is bounded by Tunis, the desert of Sahara, Morocco, and the Mediterranean Sea. Physically the country resembles Morocco. The Atlas Mountains traverse it east and west, and a range of lower eminences runs parallel to the coast. The valleys which open on the sea are rich and productive, but much of the surface is desert, dotted here and there by green oases about the water-courses. The rivers are not navigable. The simoom, the hot sand-laden wind from the Sahara, is a frequent and unpleasant feature of the climate. Agriculture is the occupation of eight ninths of the population. The principal productions are grain (barley), esparto-grass (used for paper-making), olives, and tobacco. Iron, copper, and zinc are mined in quantities sufficient for export. The chief cities are Algiers, Oran, Constantine, and Bona. The population consists mainly of Arabs, with 100,000 Spaniards, and 200,000 Frenchmen. The Arabs are Mohammedans, the Europeans are mainly Roman Catholics. Education is very limited among the common people, but in 1881 there were about 80,000 pupils in the schools which the state has established. By the same census there were 993 miles of railroad in Algeria, and 3,645 miles of telegraph line. In the country the Arabian money and measures are in use, but in the cities the coins and measures of France are used by all.

The history of the Arabian states which occupy the northern coast of Africa is eventful. The Carthaginians, Romans, Vandals, and Moors have successively ruled this southern coast of the Mediterranean. It was about 700 A. D. when the Arabs, glowing with zeal for their prophet, conquered this coast from the Greek Empire. Here sprung up the mixed race called "Moors." The kingdom which the Visigoths had set up upon the ruins of the Roman power in Spain had begun to decay, and the eager blood of the Moors led them to cross the straits to test their prowess on European battle-fields. They conquered Spain, 711–720, and entered France. Here in 732 they were defeated by the Frank, Charles Martel, in the memorable battle of Poictiers, which decided the destiny of Europe. The Moors built up a magnificent empire in Spain, whence they were not finally dislodged until the time of Columbus. Many of the exiled Moors and Jews settled in Algeria, and thither the Spanish followed them. The Moors sought aid from the Turks. It was granted, and Turkey repaid her trouble by seizing the country for herself. For three hundred years Algeria was nominally subject to Turkey, but its rulers, called deys, were practically independent.

Abd-el-Kā'der.
Al-gē'rĭ-a (-jē'-).
Al-giērs' (-jeerz').
Ar'ab.
A-rā'bi-an.
Car-tha-gin'ĭ-an (-jin-).
Dey (Dā).
Mar-tel'.
Mo-rŏc'co.
O-răn'.
Sa-hā'ra.
Tu'nis.
Vis'i-goths (Viz-').

Their revenues were largely made by piracy, and Christian slaves were a common sight in the Mohammedan capital. Powerful nations paid tribute to the dey to save their commerce from his fierce privateers.

In 1815 the United States took the lead in a successful naval expedition against these pirates, and other countries used similar means to prevent the outrages. French vessels, however, continued to suffer for ten years longer, when the French government took up in earnest the subjugation of the Algerians. Algiers, the capital, was taken in 1830, but now appeared the Arab, Abd-el-Kader, who roused his countrymen against the invaders, and continued the defense at intervals for sixteen years. Even after his death the Kabyle tribes of mountaineers harassed the conquerors, and it was not until 1871 that Algeria was sufficiently subdued to be ruled by civil authorities, aided by an army of 60,000 men. Its laws are made by the French Chambers at Paris, and Algeria is treated rather as a part of France than as an outlying colony.

Bulgarian Affairs.

AT the close of the last war between Russia and Turkey, the Turkish province of Bulgaria, the sufferings of whose Christian inhabitants under their Mohammedan rulers had brought on the conflict, was made a self-governing state, not wholly independent of Turkey, but bound to her by slender ties. This was the work of England, Austria-Hungary, and the other Powers prompted by a desire to prevent Russia from again interfering in Bulgarian affairs, and so advancing toward the coveted city of Constantinople. Inasmuch as Bulgaria could not be trusted to maintain unaided her position against the Russians, it was agreed by the Berlin Treaty that all the European Powers should be, in a manner, protectors of the little state. Russia, however, has spared no means to secure the friendship of the Bulgarians, with but little success. The German—Alexander—who was chosen to rule this much-protected principality, won the affections of the people for himself, and so became distasteful to the czar, who is strongly suspected of being the cause of his downfall last August. However that may be, Alexander left the country amid the tears of his adopted subjects, and the agents of Russia set about canvassing for the new election.

The Berlin Treaty ordered that the Prince of Bulgaria shall be freely elected by the population and confirmed by the Sublime Porte (the Turkish imperial government), with the consent of the Powers. No member of any of the reigning houses of the great European Powers may be elected Prince of Bulgaria. It was the intention of the signers of the treaty to remove the government as far as possible from the influence of any single Power, such as Russia, England, or Austria-Hungary. The prince is chosen, not by the people directly, but by the *Sobranje*, a representative body. This body met at Tirnova, and after a week spent in discussion unanimously elected Prince Waldemar to fill the vacancy caused by Alexander's abdication. There was no out-spoken opposition to this candidate, although it seemed to be regretfully understood that Waldemar would represent in some degree the unpopular Russian influence.

Prince Waldemar is the youngest child of King Christian IX. of Denmark. His sister, Alexandra, is the wife of the Prince of Wales, and his sister Maria is the wife of the Russian czar. It may be that it is to these relationships, together with the fact that his brother George is King of Greece, that Waldemar owed his election. His father, the Danish king, has advised the prince to decline the proffered honor, and Bulgaria has yet to look for a ruler. Russia does not admit that the *Sobranje* was legally chosen, and it is hardly probable that any one will accept the throne while Russia opposes the election.

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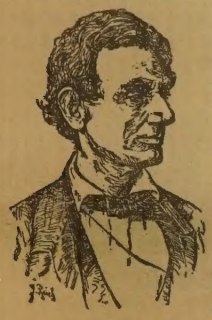

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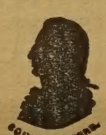

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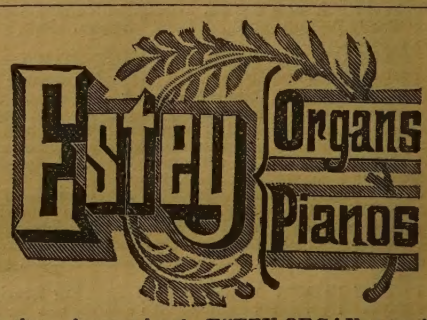

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